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CARING FOR HIGHLY ENDOWED PUPILS

JOHN LOUIS HORN
Mills College, California

Modern differential psychology is rapidly finding important applications in practical school work. It is an indispensable means in the adjustment of work to individual needs, and it is disclosing important facts regarding the degree of intelligence essential to success in school work at various stages of progress in the educational system. One purpose for which it has not yet come into extensive use is the discovery of capacity which may now be going to waste.

It is reported that German cities are beginning to seek out the well-endowed children graduating from the *Volksschule* to give them special school opportunities and to encourage them to continue their studies, even to the point of subsidizing their parents when necessary. The study upon which this report is based was undertaken with a view to outlining a procedure that might be serviceable in the determination of the extent to which highly endowed pupils in America are being overlooked by the educational agencies of the community.

The school department of the city of Oakland, California, by means of counselors and special adjustments of the curricula to the needs of school children, is making a determined effort to improve what the superintendent refers to as the "holding power" of the schools. The proportion of children of this city who go on to high school after the completion of the eighth grade in response to these efforts is amazing. Apparently it is better than 95 per cent.

In the course of these efforts two types of data were secured which served as a basis of this study. (1) Every child completing the upper half of the eighth grade in the entire system was asked whether or not he was going on to high school. In the case of children who reported that they were not going on, a statement of the child's reason for stopping his work was secured by the counselor and forwarded to the central office. (2) The Terman Group Test

was given to all of the children in the upper half of the eighth grade with the object, among others, of sending the data on to the high-school principals to facilitate their guidance of the entering classes.

The number of children tested in the class leaving the eighth grade last January was 1,173. The data are incomplete to the extent that the children absent on the day the test was given are necessarily omitted. The writer secured from the central office the written reports of the counselors regarding children not intending to continue their school work. There were in all only fifty-five reports, although the class probably numbered more than twelve hundred children. The reasons assigned for not entering high school are shown for these fifty-five pupils in Table I.

TABLE I
REASONS FOR FAILURE OF FIFTY-FIVE EIGHTH-GRADE
GRADUATES TO ENTER HIGH SCHOOL

Leaving town.....	8
Obviously not high-school types.....	4
Obvious physical or mental defects.....	12
Probably economic pressure.....	31
Total.....	55

Of the thirty-one cases indicating the presence of economic pressure as the cause of not going on to high school, it was found that seven had been absent on the day the group test was given, so

TABLE II
SCORES OF TWENTY-FOUR EIGHTH-GRADE PUPILS ON THE TERMAN GROUP TEST

Pupil	Score	Age	Pupil	Score	Age	Pupil	Score	Age
1.....	148	16	9.....	83	16	17.....	51	15
2.....	146	15	10.....	81	15	18.....	49	16
3.....	142	13	11.....	73	15	19.....	45	15
4.....	138	15	12.....	67	15	20.....	44	16
5.....	124	15	13.....	62	16	21.....	41	15
6.....	106	15	14.....	61	16	22.....	40	15
7.....	94	17	15.....	56	13	23.....	33	15
8.....	84	15	16.....	56	16	24.....	29	16

that there were only twenty-four cases regarding whose intelligence status information was available. These twenty-four pupils secured scores on the Terman Group Test as shown in Table II.

As a basis of interpretation of the scores of these twenty-four pupils, an evaluation of the Terman scores was made by the Bureau of Research and Guidance of the Oakland schools on the basis of the total number of children tested. This classification of the test scores in terms of grade marks and ratings as made by this bureau is as follows:

155 or better	=A or best 5 per cent—very superior
125-154	=B or next 10 per cent—superior
100-124	=C+ or next 20 per cent—above average
80-99	=C or next 30 per cent—average
60-79	=C- or next 20 per cent—below average
45-59	=D or next 10 per cent—inferior
0-44	=E or lowest 5 per cent—very inferior

The general median for the children tested was 91. Individual schools varied in median from 110 to 61.5. While the number of children with which this study deals is not sufficient to warrant general deductions, it is nevertheless interesting to note that the median for the group apparently being kept from high school by economic pressure was very low. Indeed, it was far below the general median, and very nearly as low as the poorest individual school. These data perhaps again emphasize the relation between native endowment and social status. It will be noted that the group of twenty-four contained no child ranking within the first 5 per cent of the entire eighth-grade group and that just one-sixth of the group made scores entitling them to rank in the first 15 per cent of all the children tested. Since we were interested in children so highly endowed that their failure to go on to high school would represent a definite social waste, it was determined that personal inquiries should be limited to such children as made a score entitling them to the classification "superior." Only two additional children would have been included in this personal investigation if the "above average" group had been taken also. In view of the fact that these two pupils were overage, as well as the fact that this plan would make the group comprise 35 per cent of all those included in the distribution, the procedure did not seem to be warranted.

Proceeding on the theory that the group test is merely diagnostic and that a small difference in score within a given class may not be

as significant as a difference of from one to three years in age, the first four cases were reranked as shown in Table III.

A personal investigation was made of the cases of these four children and certain significant facts determined: Case No. 2 (original number) had not been considered particularly bright in school and was having home difficulties. Case No. 4 (original number) was not considered unusually gifted in school, had moved, and could not be located. Case No. 1 (original number) had home difficulties.

Binet intelligence quotients were not available for these three children, but no unusual information was secured regarding any of

TABLE III
RANK, ON THE BASIS OF AGE, OF FOUR PUPILS MAKING HIGHEST
SCORES ON TERMAN GROUP TEST

Original Number	New Number	Score	Age
3.....	1	142	13
2.....	2	146	15
4.....	3	138	15
1.....	4	148	16

them that would indicate a great social loss due to their failure to attend high school. This feeling was confirmed by two lines of reasoning; it may be taken for granted that an unusually well-endowed child will ordinarily not be overage at the time of entering high school; furthermore, it may be assumed that the fact of age is an influence in securing a high score in the group test, so that the actual intelligence status is less favorable than may appear from the raw score.

Regarding Case No. 3 (original number), the only child of the twenty-four about whom the prediction may safely have been made that definite social wastage was represented, investigation disclosed the fact that at the last moment the counselor of her school was able to find a family with whom she might live in return for services rendered before and after school hours. This child, therefore, entered high school after all.

The report covering Case No. 3 included a statement from her and the counselor's comment:

I may go to high school. I want to go very bad, but last night my mother did not know whether I was going or not because my father is dead, and my mother has not very much to get on with, and there are six children in the family. I am the oldest.

A very deserving Italian child. Mother's Club looking after the case.

In order to check the prognosis that had been made on the basis of the group test, this child was given the Stanford-Binet Test at the age of 14.3 years, her score indicating a mental age of 16.4 and an I.Q. of 115.

It may be taken for granted that the situation found in the city of Oakland may not be regarded as typical of the country at large. When the entire country can show results approximating those of Oakland, we will approach the close of the period of rapid increase in attendance in high schools and settle down again to a new "normal" situation from that point of view.

Even though it is clear that in the city of Oakland very little educable material is being wasted, it is a fair question to ask whether a society as wealthy as ours ought to allow Case No. 3 to face at her age an economic struggle which, even if it does not prevent further school training, will surely deprive her of opportunities for the mental and social development of which she is capable.

While Case No. 3 has been most fortunate in the opportunity which she has secured to go through high school, the conditions under which she must work are at least discouraging. Her household duties engage her full time before school in the morning and after school until eight o'clock in the evening, when she goes to her room and studies until ten. On Saturday she is occupied practically all day with general house cleaning. Sunday she is free at four o'clock and goes home to spend the rest of the afternoon and evening with her people.

In school she is carrying four subjects: English, mathematics, history, and sewing, and is getting on well in all but mathematics. She is in danger of failing in that subject—a quite new experience to her, as her grades in the elementary school were always high.

When asked about the effectiveness of her evening study, she replied that she became very sleepy, because prior to coming to her present work she had been in the habit of going to bed at half-past eight. Since she stated that she prepares her history lesson first in the evening because she likes it best, it may be that her failure in mathematics is due to the fact that she is physically and mentally fatigued by the time she begins to study that subject.

Along with her high-school work and her duties in connection with earning her living, Case No. 3 is carrying a great deal of home worry. Her mother cannot go to work as she has many children to look after. Her father is dead, and her uncle who has been supporting her family is ill. Her brothers and sisters ought to be helped to go through school, and she realizes that the moment she has finished her own course it will be necessary for her to begin to assist them.

In view of the fact that the median score for the children entering the Oakland high schools in January, 1921, was 91, and Case No. 3's score was 142, a difference that is greater than the figures indicate because of the fact that she probably was below the average in chronological age, does it seem fair to subject her to the economic struggle described? Is the time approaching in America, as it has evidently arrived in some parts of Germany, when funds will be available to support the highly endowed children of economically incompetent parents through their years of schooling?